

CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED:

1. A protease-related protein, the protein comprising the amino acid sequence of FIGURE 1 or an amino acid sequence differing therefrom by one or more amino acids.

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2. A DNA coding for a protein according to claim 1, wherein the DNA comprises:

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- (a) the DNA of FIGURE 1 or a DNA differing therefrom by one or more base pairs,
- (b) a DNA hybridizing with the DNA of (a), or
- (c) a DNA related to the DNA of (a) or (b) via the degenerated genetic code.

15 3. An expression plasmid comprising the DNA according to claim 2.

4. A transformant containing the expression plasmid according to claim 3.

5. A process for the preparation of the protein according to claim 1, comprising the cultivation of the transformant according to claim 4 under suitable conditions.

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6. Antibodies directed against the protein according to claim 1.

7. Use of the protein according to claim 1 and the DNA according to claim 2 as well as the antibody according to claim 6 for detecting the keratinization of hair.

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8. Use of the protein according to claim 1 for the negative regulation of the keratinization of hair.

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9. Use according to claim 8, wherein the protein is present as such or in the form of a nucleic acid expressing it.

10. Use according to claim 8 or 9, wherein substances are also used which inhibit the proteins Ha3 and/or CK15.

11. Use according to claim 10, wherein the substances are antibodies directed 5 against Ha3 and CK15, respectively, and/or anti-sense oligonucleotides, all of which inhibit the expression of the nucleic acids encoding these proteins.

12. Use of the protein according to claim 1 for the positive regulation of the certification of hair.

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13. Use according to claim 12, wherein the protein is present in the form of a substance inhibiting it.

14. Use according to claim 13, wherein the substance is an antibody according to 15 claim 6 and/or an anti-sense oligonucleotide which inhibits the expression of the nucleic acid encoding the protein.

15. Use according to any one of claims 12 to 14, wherein the proteins Ha3 and/or CK15 are also present as such or in the form of nucleic acids expressing them.

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